

**RACIAL HARMONY FORUM
MEETING SUMMARY**

**JULY 24, 2002
STOCKTON CIVIC AUDITORIUM
525 NORTH CENTER STREET
STOCKTON CALIFORNIA**

MEMBERS PRESENT

George Ridler, Superintendent, Stockton Unified School District
Bishop Stephen Blaire, Diocese of Stockton
Chief Edward Chavez, Stockton Police Department
Roger Coover, President/Publisher, *The Record*
Baxter Dunn, San Joaquin County Sheriff
Gary Gillis, Chief, City of Stockton Fire Department
Pastor Bob Hailey, Unity Southern Baptist Church/Metro Ministry
Brittany Hood, Youth Advisory Commissioner
Don Halseth, representing John Rieckewald, Superintendent of Manteca Unified
Bill Huyett, Superintendent, Lodi Unified School District
Dennis Lee, President, Asian-American Chamber of Commerce
Mark Lewis, City Manager
Janet Lilly, President, African-American Chamber of Commerce
Bill Murray, Judge
Gary Podesto, Mayor
Jose Rivera, Administrator, Kaiser Permanente
Breanne Robertson, Youth Advisory Commissioner
Randy Ruby, Executive Director Builders Exchange of Stockton, Inc.
Christine Tien, Deputy City Manager
Doug Wilhoit, CEO, Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce

The Forum met on July 24, 2002 at 11:30 a.m.

Dr. Bill Huyett introduced Urv Jefferson, the Coordinator for Community Outreach in Lodi Unified School District. He stated that several individuals in his district who reviewed the mission statement, indicated that a vision statement should only be a phrase and that the one selected by the forum members is appropriate.

Dr. Huyett asked for any suggested changes to the Vision.

The following suggestions were made:

- Use of the words "foundation" "building" and "girder"
- "Task" or "fairness"
- "Just relationships"
- "Building a Community on a foundation that includes fairness, racial harmony, human dignity and girded by the strength of its diversity"
- "Building a community on a foundation of human dignity, racial harmony, fair opportunity and just relations and girded by the strength of its diversity."

Chief Chavez expressed concern that the statement should be one that is easily understood by all the citizens.

Dr. Huyett stated that the vision should be clear and succinct.

The majority of the members stated that they are happy with the vision as it was constructed.

Ms. Lily stated that she would like the word “building” inserted in the vision as it shows “action.”

Dr. Huyett suggested “Building a community committed to its diversity where racial harmony, human dignity and fair opportunity are our strengths.”

The forum members discussed the use of “fair” versus “equal.” It was the consensus of the forum members to use “equal” as it is more powerful.

Bishop Blair stated that he is interested in capturing a sense of “justice.”

The Vision was reconstructed as follows: “Strengthening our diverse community through commitment to racial harmony, human dignity, equal opportunity and justice.”

Dr. Huyett stated that Mr. Jefferson suggested to him that the forum members look at the strategic planning approach. He added that the task force needs to know in the next brainstorming step what it is that they are trying to get prioritized under a vision.

Mr. Jefferson referred to his handout, which he described as a flow chart. He stated that this body should come up with core values that they wish to share with the community; what defines this body and its core values—values that clarify and resolve issues.

Dr. Huyett commented that by way of the task force hearings, they’ve done external and internal environment search and have formed a vision. It is after this that an action plan should be formed. He stated that goals and commitments are two different things, commitments are values and a goal is an action plan on the strategy.

Bishop Blair commented that the group has identified four core values in the vision statement and if there were time to do a full-blown strategic plan they might want to expand on the core value. However, since time is limited, the group may want to identify items that they might want to be committed to specifically.

Dennis Lee stated that outreach is needed and that forum members should get out into the community to show what has been done.

Dr. Huyett explained the process: a brief brainstorming session with everyone having an opportunity to express their views on the over-arching commitments that this organization has and then the ideas will be whittled down through a prioritization process where they would arrive at somewhere between five and ten main commitments. He stated that any idea is a good idea and there would be no comments made on the idea. Another person’s idea cannot be repeated, but it can be piggybacked upon.

The following are the goals and over-arching commitments that the forum members arrived at after brainstorming and piggybacking on ideas:

1. Hire employees who reflect the racial makeup of the community, and encourage diversity in the workforce by operating career fairs.
2. Promote interracial forums throughout the city on topics of common concern, such as youth and family.
3. Promote and improve opportunities for young people of all racial backgrounds to receive higher education.
4. Cultivate and recruit management positions.
5. Promote culture events, and encourage cultural awareness and cultural activities at other community events.
6. Cultivate and promote cultural activities through corporate business sponsorship.
7. Identify and cooperate with clubs and organizations throughout the community.
8. Diminish fears, real or perceived, in all cultures.

9. Design and support programs for at-risk populations.
10. Encourage ecumenical and interfaith interaction within the faith communities.
11. Encourage personal responsibility in a diverse community.
12. Increase and improve cultural diversity training.
13. Encourage collaborative partnerships with/between non-profit organizations.
14. Develop personal relationships throughout the community, thereby creating a safe environment to discuss issues of diversity.
15. Ensure that services and programs are accessible to everyone in the community by providing translation and support services.
16. Expand the number and increase the flexibility of safe youth activities, and increase the number of young people involved in these activities.
17. Support leadership and fund development by training leaders to access resources.
18. Develop community leaders and positive role models from all racial backgrounds and encourage them to take the lead in promoting racial harmony—clasp hands rather than point fingers.
19. Promote and encourage civic involvement from members of diverse communities.
20. Explore forums for improving communication among all parties.
21. Teach tolerance and cultural appreciation in early education.
22. Develop cadres at school sites and government agencies.
23. Educate others on diversity in the community
24. Reduce the gaps in achievement among students
25. Establish and maintain mechanisms for two-way communication.
26. Develop an awards system for businesses with exceptional customer service.
27. Develop and provide outlines for the creation of sermons and lectures
28. Develop ways to encourage parental involvement,
29. Promote and support intra-cultural unity.
30. Accept and embrace differences among people and cultures.
31. Create better understanding and communication between the community and the criminal and civil justice systems.
32. Institutionalize issues of diversity.
33. Create, maintain, and advertise internship opportunities for the local youth in public agencies and private businesses.
34. Create a regular series in *The Record*, written by the Racial Harmony and Fairness Task Force.
35. Gather demographic data for government agencies.
36. Look at each person as an individual by eliminating stereotypes.
37. Start an annual event with a focus on diversity.

Mayor Podesto stated that another meeting will be scheduled soon to prioritize the suggestions. Members will be notified.